

she opened her eyes. Oh what a day! She held up her arm in the sunlight; all the little hairs on it glittered like fine gold, and her closed fingers were ember-colored as if there were a light inside them.

She kicked off the blankets and pointed her foot into the sunlight, and her toes were ember-colored too, though not so much as her fingers.

She yawned and stretched and gave a sudden leap that brought her out of bed. Without waiting to put on a bathrobe she ran out of the room and down the stairs which were uncarpeted and hollow sounding, like drums.

Bang! went the screen door at the bottom, and Garnet was halfway across the lawn; racing towards a small pen that stood by itself. Eric had built it especially for Timmy.

"Timmy!" called Garnet, "Lazy Timmy, it's time to get up!" But Timmy had been awake for ages and came lolloping over to the fence rail looking interested and hungry. He was quite big now, and his coat was very stiff and fine; he stood wed and looked as if he could take care of himself no matter what happened. Every day for several weeks Garnet had been training him to walk and stand like a prize hog. Mr. Freebody had showed her how to steer him along with two little boards, and how to make him stand neatly with his two front hoofs together.

Garnet scratched Timmy's back with a twig, and he leaned against the fence with his little eyes half closed, grunting softly with pleasure.

"Today you must remember everything I've taught you," Garnet told him. "You are going for a long ride in a little crate that you won't like much. And then you'll be taken into a big sort of shed and put into a pen by yourself; but there'll be lots of other pens

there with pigs in them too. So you can make friends and not be lonesome. Then by-and-by some men will come and look at you and you must walk right and stand right just the way I showed you, and maybe you'll win a lovely blue ribbon."

Timmy twitched his little tail that ass all curled up like a pretzel; then he rolled over on his back so that she could scratch his stomach.

"Garnet!" called Mrs. Linden from the house. "You come in and get dressed this minute!"

It was rather chilly with nothing on but a nightgown. Garnet wrapped her arms around her cold self and hurried to the house.

"Will he win a prize, mother, do you think?" she asked.

"I shouldn't wonder, darling," said her mother, "he's a changed pig since you took him in hand."

Garnet went up to her room and dressed with care. She put on the blue dress and shoes. (But not the strapped ones; those she would never wear again!) She braided her pigtails so tight they hurt her, and scrubbed her face till it had a shine like shellac. Then she went down to the kitchen where she could hear bacon hissing and sputtering in the frying pan.

The whole family was going to the fair, and they were all dressed up for the occasion. Jay and Eric both had straight hair for once; they had used so much water on it that there were little trickles at the back of their necks; and Donald had to eat his breakfast in one of Mrs. Linden's aprons so that he would be sure to leave the table without oatmeal decorations. Garnet thought her mother looked wonderful; she had on a flowered dress, and her hair was different. Mr. Linden looked fine, too, in a dark suit and a collar that hurt him.

Garnet's stomach felt as if there were a pinwheel inside of it turning and spinning a shower of sparks. She said so to her mother.

"It's excitement," said Mrs. Linden calmly, "excitement and emptiness. Eat your cereal." "Oh *mother!*" groaned Garnet, "I can't." "Yes you can, darling," insisted her mother heartlessly. "You can't leave the house till you've finished every spoonful." Garnet ploughed through the cereal grimly.

"It's like eating Boulder Dam," she grumbled, but she finished it. Then she leapt from her chair and started for the door; and then came slowly, sadly back.

"The dishes," she said. "Oh, let them stand for once!" cried Mrs. Linden grandly, "we can do them when we come home. This is an important day."

"You're nice," said Garnet, and gave her mother a hug.

Eric called through the window, "Come on Garnet, Mr. Freebody's here with his truck, let's get Timmy in his box."

"Poor pie!" said Garnet to Timmy, who struggled and rolled his eyes and squealed when they put him in the crate. "But just think if you win a prize!"

"That little hog don't care nothing about blue ribbons, I bet." said Mr. Freebody, "a couple of square feet of mud and a full trough and he'd be a durn sight more contented." Mr. Freebody Laughed. "He sure loots pretty as a peach though, don't he? Smells good, too. How did that happen?"

"Oh, I washed him." said Garnet. "The soap smelled like that."

"My, my what a fancy little hog!" chuckled Mr. Freebody. "With all them clean bristles and that fine smell of perfumery I'm going to be mighty disappointed in the Fair Authorities if he don't get a prize! "

Mr. Freebody had offered to drive his truck to New Conniston solely for Timmy's convenience. The Linden's didn't have a truck and there wasn't enough room in the Ford for both the family and Timmy's crate.

"But I'm going to ride in the truck with you, Mr. Freebody," Garnet told him.

"Just so's you can keep on eye on that pig, I bet," said Mr. Freebody, "well get in then. It's time we started."

Garnet watched the precious crate safely installed on the back of the truck; then she got in herself. She called good-bye to her family who were busily getting themselves sorted out and into the Ford. This was particularly difficult as Mrs. Hauser, her daughter Citronella and her son Hugo had just arrived and wanted to go with them.

"It's a good thing you decided to come with me," remarked Mr. Freebody, "otherwise I don't know how you would have got to the fair, or Timmy either. Them Hausers are a mighty fleshy family."

Garnet watched Mrs. Hauser get into the car. Did he imagine it, or did she ready see the Ford sink down a little on its springs, as if it sighed under a great weight. My goodness, thought Garnet, Mother, Father, Jay, Donald, Eric, and Mrs. Hauser, and Hugo, and -

"Citronella!" shouted Garnet, "you come ride with us. There's lots of room, isn't there Mr. Freebody?"

"Always room for one more," said Mr. Freebody gallantly, leaning across Garnet to open the door for Citronella.

Garnet squirmed around to peer through the window at Timmy in his box.

"He looks as if he had hurt feelings," she said. "He'll probably never forgive me for this."

"Just try giving him something to eat and see how he'll come around," said Mr. Freebody, "Hogs are only sensitive between meals."

By this time the truck was halfway down the side road.

"My, I was awful scared I wasn't going to get to go to the fair at all," said Citronella. "Merle took the car to Hanson to get the springs fixed, and Cicero and Dad and Uncle Ed took our Holstein bull to the fair in the stake truck. Wasn't anything Left for us but the team till Mama thought of asking you folks."

"It's a good day for a fair," remarked Mr. Freebody, " 't ain't cold, 't ain't hot, and not a cloud in sight."

"Do you think he's warm enough?" asked Garnet.

"Who?" said Mr. Freebody, "Timmy? He's warm, don't you worry."

When they came to Hodgeville, Mr. Freebody stopped the truck.

"How about some ice-cream cones?" he asked.

"It's a fine idea," said Garnet.

"It's a marvelous idea," said Citronella.

So Mr. Freebody went into a drugstore and got a maple-nut ice-cream cone for Citronella, and a chocolate ice-cream cone for Garnet, and a plain vanilla one for himself. But for Timmy he bought a strawberry one and Let Garnet poke it between the laths of the crate. Timmy's snout trembled all around the edges with joy, and in a second he had gobbled every crumb. He looked less miserable.

"He knows you ain't betrayed him anyhow," Mr. Freebody told Garnet.

Citronella just stood looking at them.

"Giving ice cream to a pig," she said, and gave her cone a long, thoughtful lick. "To a pig!" she repeated and gave a another lick. "My land, what ~ waste!"

she said.

"I'm doing lots of awful things today," said Garnet complacently. "Leaving the dishes, feeding ice-cream cones to pigs, and eating one myself at nine o'clock in the morning!"

"Won't hurt you once in a while," said Mr. Freebody and they all got back in the truck and slammed the doors.

On they drove through the burning blue day. There was no haze on the hills, no mist on the river. Everything was clear as crystal. They passed Melody, and Garnet remembered the people on the bus, and the wonderful ride after the people got off, and how she'd bounced around on the seat and tried not to scream.

She looked back at Timmy. He was lying down.

"Do you think he's ah right?" she asked.

"Who?" said Mr. Freebody, "Timmy? He's fine, never felt better."

Garnet looked at Mr. Freebody out of the corners of her eyes and laughed.

"You understand pigs pretty well, don't you Mr. Freebody" she remarked.

"Sure do," said he. "Ought to. Raised enough of 'em! "

Now they could see New Conniston on its hill. Garnet felt the pinwheel in her stomach again.

They drove past the little shabby homes, and on through the main street with its big important stores and the dime store where Garnet had bought her presents; past the park with the fountain and on to the outskirts of the city where the fairgrounds were.

Then they drove through the wide gates into the new, gay world of the fair, which, like a magic city in a story, had sprung up over night.

It was a whirling, jingling, bewildering collection of noise and color and smell. Everything seemed to

be spinning and turning; merry-go-rounds, the Ferris wheel, the whip cars. There were dozens of tents with peaked tops and scalloped edges, and little colored flags flying from them. Citronella grabbed Garnet and Garnet grabbed Citronella, and they bounced up and down shrieking with excitement. Mr. Freebody was calmer. "I always like a fair," he said.

They drove directly to the stock pavilions and stopped in front of the one that was labeled SWINE in big black letters.

The man in charge of it was fat and kind looking. His name was Fred Lembke. He and Mr. Freebody carried the crate in, opened it, and put Timmy in a nice clean pen with hay on the floor. "He doesn't feel at home yet," said Garnet apologetically to Mr. Lembke, because Timmy just stood where he had been set down, looking insulted and loathing everything.

"He's a mighty fine little boar, just the same," said Mr. Lembke with real admiration in his voice (not just the nice-to-children sort). "Who's showing him?"

"I am," replied Garnet, feeling very motherly towards Timmy.

Mr. Lembke took a notebook from his pocket and a I~ pencil from behind his ear and asked Garnet her name, and all about Timmy. Then he put a sign above Timmy's pen that said:

Class 36: Boar under 6 months.

Breed: Hampshire.

Owner: Garnet Linden.

Garnet mad the sign over three or four times to herself. Then she turned to Mr. Freebody. "Am I supposed to stay and watch him?" she asked.

"No, no," replied Mr. Freebody. "You two little girls go on out and enjoy yourselves. You've got hours

before the judges come. Three o'clock they'll be here, and see that you get back in time!"

"I don't know how I'll ever wait till three o'clock," sighed Garnet, but in the next minute she had forgotten all about time and waiting. There were dozens, hundreds of things to see and do.

First they looked at all the other pigs in the shed. There were several others in Timmy's class, some bigger than he, and some more important looking. Garnet and Citronella examined each one with anxiety.-

"Well anyway," said Garnet, "I bet Timmy's got the nicest nature." "He's the handsomest, too," said Citronella stoutly.

The place was full of pigs. There were many different breeds with high sounding names like Poland-China, Chester White, and Duroc-Jersey. There were grumpy looking hogs, and sows with litters of pigs all different sizes. In one pen there was a whole group of baby ones fast asleep; white as thistledown, they were, with pale pink ears and little turned-up snouts. It didn't seem possible that they would someday grow up to be boisterous, bellowing, bad mannered pigs. In another pen, near the front of the shed, there was a prize hog, black and thundery, and big as a grand piano. On the sign above him were pinned the ribbons from past fairs, all blue!

The whole shed resounded with the snorts, grunts, squeals and grumblings of pigs conversing.

"How rude they sound," said Garnet, "as if they never said nice things to each other, but just scolded, and snatched, and told each other to get out of the way."

The cattle pavilion seemed very quiet and respectable after that.

There was almost no noise. Cows stood in stalls on either side of the shed, with soft, dull eyes, and jaws moving patiently. There were little calves



with pink noses, and magnificent, dangerous-looking bulls.

Carnet and Citronella stopped in front of the Hausers' Holstein, staring admiringly. He was massive and beautiful, with his shining black-and-white coat.

Mr. Hauser came and stood beside them with his hands in his pockets.

"Looks pretty good, don't he?" he remarked.

"He chased me once," said Garnet rather proudly. "I was pretty scared."

"Yes, and who saved you that time?" asked someone, giving one of her pigtails a jerk. Garnet turned around. Of course it was Mr. Freebody.

"You won't ever have to do it again," she promised.

"Looks Like you couldn't lose, Herman," said Mr. Freebody to Mr. Hauser, and the two girls went on to look at the horses.

There were stallions in big stalls there, roan, and Dapple grey and black. They had huge arched necks and dark fiery eyes. Their hoofs made a heavy, restless noise upon the floorboards. And there' was a little colt that was hard to leave. He had a satiny coat, and long unreliable legs that he could fold up like jack-knives. He looked delicate and mischievous standing by the strong, protecting shape of his mother.

"If he was mine I'd name him Ariel," said Garnet stroking his nose. Oh, how soft his nose was! Like moss, like velvet, Like the palm of a baby's hand.

"Of course it might not suit him when he grew up," she added thoughtfully. "Ariel's a funny name anyway. Like on a radio. I don't see what it's got to do with a horse," said Citronella. "If he was mine I'd name him Black Beauty like the book."

"But he's not black," objected Garnet. "Well, it's a good name for a horse," said Citronella.

Finally they tore themselves away, and left the dim sheds where the air had a heavy smell of hay and animals, and went out into the blare and flourish of the fair.

## **IX. Ice-Cream Cones and Blue Ribbons**

THEY creased a smooth dirt track that lay in a large oval fair. Later in the day there would be trotting races on this track, and there would be crowds of excited people at either side, but now it was just a kind of road to be crossed.

They simply wandered for a while, pausing to look at the shies, and the shooting gallery, and the screaming people in the whip cars. They bought two ice-cream cones and poked along, stopping to read the signs outside of the tents that you had to pay to go into. There were a lot of them, all interesting. Aurora the Mystic Mind Reader. Professor Hedwitz, World Famous Phrenologist. Hercules Junior, the Samson of the Century. Dagmar, the Female Sword Swallower. Zara, the Jungle Dancer. Below the last name, Zara, there was a little notice saying: persons under 16 not admitted. Both Garnet and Citronella were dying to know why not. There were many other tents and sideshows but it was still too early in the day for them to be open, and those loud-voiced men who usually shout outside and take the money, had not yet appeared.

The flaps of the tent announcing Dagmar, the Female Sword Swallower, were open, and inside Garnet and Citronella saw a woman in a kimona sitting on a chair and darning a sock. She was chewing gum.

"Do you think it's her?" whispered Citronella as they went on.